



RTCA in Virginia

The Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance (RTCA) program is the community assistance arm of the National Park Service. The National Park Service (NPS) staff provide technical assistance to community groups, city, county, tribal governments, and non-profit organizations working to enhance close-to-home outdoor recreation and natural resource conservation opportunities. We help local leaders plan and design trails and parks; conserve and improve access to natural areas; protect special places; and create recreation opportunities.

The RTCA program in Virginia offers a wide range of services that can be tailored to meet the needs of an individual project. The NPS staff members are trained facilitators who encourage project leaders to build collaborative partnerships among governmental and non-governmental stakeholders. The program helps communities and groups define their vision, goals, and objectives; analyze issues and opportunities; and develop strategic action plans and time lines for projects. We do not provide financial assistance, but can help project partners identify and secure sources of funding and technical support.

Any community with committed project partners can apply for assistance. Believing the best plans are completed locally, the National Park Service will work with partners to encourage broad-based community participation in planning, designing, and implementing the projects we support.

In 2016, the National Park Service in Virginia will work on a variety of projects including:

- **Gloucester Blueways and Flood Mitigation** – The project goal is to develop a system of blueways and greenways in Gloucester County, Virginia that connect public lands, historic sites, and natural areas for recreation, wellness, flood mitigation and habitat conservation. (Location: Gloucester County, Virginia)
- **Groundwork Richmond Virginia (RVA)** – The project goal is to transform neglected urban areas into parks, trails, and community space in Richmond's underserved neighborhoods by cultivating and empowering local youth and citizens. Primary focus will be on the development of a greenway and trail along Reedy Creek. (Location: Richmond, Virginia)
- **Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail** – The project goal is to continue evolving the network of locally-managed trails for recreation, education, transportation and health, extending from the Allegheny Highlands to the Chesapeake Bay. (Location: Potomac River corridor)
- **Rockbridge Area Outdoors Plan** – The project goal is to establish outdoor recreation as a primary economic driver in Rockbridge County, Virginia thorough an integrated system of parks and trails that link towns, historic sites, and natural attractions and supports community health and conservation goals. (Location: Rockbridge County, Lexington and Buena Vista, Virginia)
- **Tinker Creek Greenway** – The project goal is to develop the Tinker Creek Greenway that links urban communities to natural areas while providing an array of economic, environmental, recreation, wellness, and transportation benefits. (Location: Roanoke and Botetourt Counties, Virginia)
- **Three Corners Regional Trails** – The project goal is to develop a regional master plan for the four-county, three state area surrounding Cumberland Gap National Historical Park with a focus on development and promotion of outdoor recreation possibilities such as hiking, biking, equestrian, off-highway vehicle and water trails. (Location: Lee County, Virginia)



Hikers enjoying a trail in Rockbridge County, VA

- **Tredegar- James River Park Connections (NPS Urban Agenda Pilot)** – The project goal is to provide a seamless recreational and historic experience at Belle Isle Park, Tredegar Iron Works, and the American Civil War Museum in downtown Richmond, Virginia through improved physical connections, wayfinding and interpretive programming. (Location: Richmond, Virginia)
- **Virginia Statewide Conservation and Recreation Planning** – The project goal is to provide planning and policy support to the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation on issues related to natural, historic, scenic, and recreational resources. (Location: Virginia - Statewide)
- **Wildrock (Nature Play Scape)** – The project goal is to increased wellness of children and families by offering inviting play spaces, discovery trails, and other facilities to make nature experiences accessible and attractive to families, school groups, and nonprofits serving youth. (Location: Central Virginia)

Recent Success Story

Spotsylvania Greenways Initiative (SGI) – The Spotsylvania Greenways Initiative (SGI) envisions a future where everyone is within walking distance of a path or park to connect county residents to nature, to recreation, and to each other through regional trail networks. Founded in 2009, SGI opened the first 1-mile segment of the Ni River Trail on National Trails Day, June 5, 2010. Since then, SGI has been working in partnership with the NPS, Spotsylvania County and local citizens to develop trails, host healthy living events, and nurture volunteers to support trail maintenance activities. A partnership was also launched with Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park. During summer 2015, 150 youth from local YMCA camps participated in "Find Your Park" events at Chancellorsville National Battlefield. The program supports the NPS Centennial Goals by engaging youth and teen leaders in activities that promote healthy outdoor recreation and connect youth to nationally significant historic sites in their own backyard.

For more information about the RTCA program refer to: www.nps.gov/rtca, or for information about ongoing or potential RTCA projects in Virginia contact:

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